



Analysis of Fotu Values in Nias Traditional Marriage

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ANALYSIS OF *FOTU* VALUES IN NIAS TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

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Abstract

Nias tribe has a distinctive marital process and is different from the marriage process of other tribes in the area of North Sumatra. One of the important and mandatory processes in carrying out customary in Nias is *Fotu*. *Fotu* is delivered verbally (Folk Speech) and has been carried out downwardly until now. The object of this research is *Fotu*. This study aims to analyze and describe the values of *Fotu*. This study uses a type of qualitative research with interview methods. This research uses pragmatic theory and the result of the study is analyzed by the theory of content analysis and descriptive analysis. Based on the result of the study, *Fotu* delivered verbally in the process of Nias' traditional marriage contains cultural values, namely religious values, ethical values, and aesthetic values. The values contained in *Fotu* are used as a way of maintaining marriage in Nias community.

Keywords: Culture Value, *Fotu*, Nias Traditional Marriage.

1. INTRODUCTION

Culture is the overall knowledge of humans as social beings that are used to understand the environment, their experiences and guidelines for their behavior. Edward Burnett Tylor (Liliweri, 2014: 4-5) provides a definition of culture as a complex collection of knowledge, belief, art, moral law, customs, and any other abilities or habits that humans acquire as members of society. While Koendjaraningrat stated that culture as an interpretation of tradition. One interpretation of this tradition is traditional knowledge. Then Liliweri (2014: 224-225) explains this traditional knowledge is not written because it is inherited based on oral tradition. This knowledge is in traditional songs, stories, legends, dreams, myths, fables, all of which are methods and practices as transmission tools from one generation to another.

Traditional knowledge as part of culture can be explained based on oral tradition. Oral tradition (Sibarani, 2014: 43-47; 125-126) is a traditional cultural activity of a society that is inherited from generation to generation through oral media from one generation to another, both traditions in the form of verbal words and traditions others that are not oral (non-verbal). Oral tradition can be in the form of various knowledge and customs which are passed down orally which include not only folklore, legend or myth. Oral tradition includes or relates to

history, customary law, traditional ceremonies, religious ceremonies, traditional herbs, and treatments. All of that can be said as an oral tradition and the process of dissemination is usually carried out orally or spelled out (Karkono, 2013: 272-273). Oral tradition can also be called a cultural tradition. Important things that become contents and which need to be considered in the cultural content, cultural traditions or oral traditions are the meanings and functions, cultural values and norms as well as local wisdom.

Every region in Indonesia can almost certainly have a traditional culture including oral traditions or oral literature. One area in Indonesia that has traditional culture is Nias island in the province of North Sumatra. Sadieli (2017: 84) explains that the cultural values of Nias can be traced or traced through oral traditions, patterned habits (customs) and inheritance from ancestors. Overall, there are four values contained in Nias tradition/culture, namely 1) religious values, meaning Nias people's appreciation of holy life, 2) philosophical values, meaning Nias people are interested in life wisdom, 3) ethical values, meaning Nias people who always prioritize goodness and decency, 4) aesthetic value, meaning Nias people who are interested in things that are fun, encouraging both attitudes, behavior and speech.

Nias (*Ono Niha*) has a tradition or culture inherited by the ancestors. Sadieli (2007: 43) explains that what is still coloring or maintained in the lives of Nias people is now the customs of marriage. Marriage customs are one of the social institutions that develop in the midst of society. Social institutions get the legitimacy of the entire community, especially supporters of indigenous peoples. Marriage in Nias is still carried out in accordance with the prevailing traditional ceremonies.

On the island of Nias there are traditional Nias marriages or cultural traditions that should not be forgotten, preserved and not neglected. In connection with this, Sadieli (2007; 47) asserts that Nias customs have been going on for a long time and generation which then gave birth to a life view or way of life. The cultural tradition in question is "*Fotu*". Is one of the Nias customs carried out in the marriage procedure in Nias. *Fotu* is interpreted as advice, advice or advice and a way of life to fight for the family ark after a wedding party. The tradition of *Fotu* is delivered verbally to the bride and groom or the bride in a wedding ceremony. *Fotu* is delivered by a competent person, someone who is respected and specifically appointed. *Fotu* delivered in oral language (Folk Speech). Your picture must not be overlooked in the Nias traditional marriage procedure. *Fotu* or "*Famotu*" was delivered verbally to both brides, both men and women.

Fotu is one of the traditions that has been ratified in the marriage procedure in Nias. *Famotu* must be carried out in the marriage procedure. For this compulsory reason the marriage procedure is rooted in the word "*aila*", meaning that the things outlined by the "must" must be carried out. If not, there will be ridicule such as "*si lö mangila hada*" (people who do not know tradition), "*ira alawe si lö mufotu*" (women who have not received fotu), and many other names (Sadieli, 2007: 47). *Fotu* delivered verbally to the bride and groom at a traditional wedding ceremony has the potential to maintain the family's value (household ark) in the oral tradition of Nias. *Fotu* contains things that are *Sumange Ba*

Lakhömi (great and noble). This majesty and nobleness is a priority feature in forming a family as a community cell. Therefore, *fotu* can be said to be a family life institution as well as a social institution for the community.

Fotu is a way of life that must be applied by the family as well as members of the community. However, in reality, *fotu* have not been maximally applied by families in this modern age. This real problem can be suspected due to various factors, first; Nias people who live in cities carry out the procedure of marriage in modern ways. Second; Speakers of oral traditions about *Fotu* have begun to diminish because competent parents have not regenerated the culture of *fotu* in the next generation. Third; Nias people are now interested in the implementation of marriage in a modern way, because it is considered a very traditional society. Fourth; *Fotu* is received by the bride and groom at the time of marriage have not been fully implemented in the household. As a result, divorce cases, domestic violence, infidelity, and other problems arise.

Fotu is part of the social institutions of society, cultural institutions as well as a reflection of the socio-culture of the people of Nias. Sadieli (2017: 47) emphasizes that if socially constructed traditions or habits are neglected, forgotten, excluded, identity becomes blurred. So, *fotu* in Nias marriage needs to be preserved and transformed so that it remains valuable in the context of the life of Nias people. On the basis of the preservation and transformation of this great and sublime Nias marriage customs, this study was conducted.

2. CONCEPT AND THEORY

Culture as a complex collection of knowledge, belief, art, moral law, customs, and any other abilities or habits acquired by humans as members of society (Edward Burnett Tylor in Alo Liliweri, 2014: 4-5). Edward explained that the word culture was used to explain the "culture" of humans as a whole. Culture as a pattern of thought and behavior that is known to the public. The important point of culture is tradition originating from history, for example traditions originating from ideas, from values installed by a group of people and from a cultural system.

Culture is considered as a product of human action, culture as conditioning element of action. Culture is also seen as "design for life", culture as a way of life for a particular group of people, culture as a standard for deciding "what", what to do about "what" and how to do "what". The cultural values of society can be summarized briefly referring to the following cultural figures of Koentjaraningrat (Alo Liliweri, 2014: 16-17): a) Systems of belief/religion include: belief systems, systems of values and life views, religious communication, religious ceremonies, b) Community systems or social organizations include: kinship, associations and associations, state systems, living systems, associations, c) Knowledge systems include knowledge of: flora and fauna, time, space and numbers, the human body, and behavior among humans , d) Languages, including: oral, written, e) Art includes, sculpture, relief, painting and drawing, dressing, vocal, music, building, literature, drama, f) Living livelihood systems or economic systems which include hunting and gathering food, farming, livestock, fisheries, trade, g) Living equipment systems and technology include production, distribution, transportation; communication

equipment; consumption equipment in the form of containers; clothing and jewelry; shelter and housing, weapons.

In addition, there are several types of values. This type of value applies or exists in the cultural life of the community. The types of values are explained by Liliweri (2014: 57-72), namely, a) Personal values, are absolute or relative values and ethical values. This value is used as an assumption that can be the basis for an ethical action. What is included in personal (subjective) values comes from beliefs and belief systems. These types of personal values are ethics/morals, teachings/ideologies (religion, politics), social values and aesthetic values. b) Family values, or the nucleus family is the smallest unit of a community. There are essential values in the family, namely belonging (sense of belonging), flexibility (controlled freedom), respect, honesty, forgiveness, generosity, feeling of wanting to know (curiosity), communication, responsibility, tradition and others. c) Material values, lies in the values that humans need every day. This value makes people see wealth as a means to achieve happiness, as well as an indicator to determine their own success and those of others. d) Spiritual values are values that refer to values that are not objects. Examples of spiritual values are truth, honesty, kindness, virtue, beauty. e) Moral values, are the standard for something that is good or evil, and it is the standard that regulates the choice of individual behavior called moral. Individual morals can come from society, government, religion, or even from ourselves. Examples of life choices that conflict with moral values are same-sex marriage, living together without official marriage by religion.

Nias tribe has cultural values that can be found in oral traditions. The cultural value of Nias can be traced through oral traditions (*hoho*/poetry, *amaedola*/proverbs), patterned habits (customs), and inheritance from ancestors. Sadieli (2017: 84-92) explained the cultural values of Nias oral tradition in general, namely a) Religious values. Human Nias gives the highest appreciation to holy things. Human Nias believes that all creations in this world were created by the highest of things as names, *Sihai*, *Lowalangi*, *Silewe*, and so on. The community has something that is believed and believed to be the prime causal of understanding and respect for the holy and holy life before the Creator. This conception is inherited downwardly so that Nias people have high spiritual values, b) Philosophical values. The tradition /oral culture of Nias contains philosophical values, namely the interest of the people of Nias to the wisdom of life. The wisdom of life is to harmonize with the surrounding world, fellow humans, and with the highest form. The Nias people try to realize this philosophical value by maintaining self-harmonization with the environment (nature), others and supreme being. Disharmony is a sign of life imperfection, c) Ethical values. The Nias people always fight for, uphold and carry out ethical values (ethics), namely goodness and morality. One manifestation of fighting for ethical values is the ancestral heritage given to the current generation, *fondrakö* (customary law). *Fondrakö* binds Nias people to remain in the order of goodness and decency, d) aesthetic values. The aesthetic value in Nias society was revealed in the way of acting said, meaning that the act of communication of Nias people in essence upholds aesthetic values, namely striving for their partner to feel happy and not

hurt. There are slogans in Nias language; "*Ha li si sökhi*", that is to say, the aesthetic value in human life is "speech"; *fefu hadia ia oi ni'angenanöi*, meaning that everything must be considered and considered properly. This proves that Nias people always love inner beauty (soul) and also speech. Aesthetic values in Nias oral tradition can also be seen in traditional houses, carvings and symbols used by people in Nias.

Regarding the cultural values in the oral tradition, cultural values were found in the oral/customary tradition "*Fotu*" carried out in the marriage procedure in Nias. *Fotu* includes oral traditions /cultural customs carried out by Nias people in the marriage procedure. One important process in Nias traditional marriage is *Fotu*. *Fotu* is a process carried out 1 week or 3 days before a traditional wedding party is held. *Fame'e Fotu* functions as a guide for married life. The *fame'e fotu* ceremony is something that should not be ignored. This traditional ceremony has the potential to maintain family life after the traditional wedding ceremony is completed.

In its implementation there are provisions for who is present at this event. From the side of the man (the prospective bride) is a biological mother, the wives of male siblings, traditional female leaders. The woman present (the bride and groom) was the biological mother of the woman, the wife of the sister of the female father, the wives of the *Salawa* and the wives of the traditional leaders, the wives/mothers of competent residents of the women's side.

After this event is finished, the *gong*, drum and *canang* are sounded. This *fame'e* was carried out by means of the bride seated in the midst of a meeting of the women who formed a circle. One by one the selected mothers delivered "*Fotu*" verbally to the bride and groom. Every mother is given the opportunity to take turns to convey "*Fotu*". Usually *Fotu* is delivered in oral language in the form of figurative language, proverbs, parables or stories. *Fotu*, which by the Nias community aims to form a harmonious family. There is a term that is often expressed when there is a mother or woman who is not good: *aila, ira alawe si lö mufotu* (Embarrassed, the nature of women who have not obtained applied *fotu*).

Fotu is customs, rules, ways of life or guidelines for carrying out family life in the midst of society. *Fotu* as a literary work as well as an aesthetic object. Rene Wellek and Austin Warren (2016: 321) say any literary works including oral traditions are placed in a ranking to get their position as an aesthetic experience. Then literary works can be located as community standards and norms.

Fotu can be used as a standard and norm in society. Considering the usefulness of this cultural tradition to be well maintained, the theory used in the analysis is First; pragmatic theory. *Fotu* has the dimension of folk lorry, which means that this research leads to pragmatics, namely towards the usefulness of folklore for broad life.

Folklore has uses for anyone. Suwardi E (2009: 89) explains folklore is a work that can not be separated from the problem of life. Life needs a moral frame, to run smoothly. Folklore also will offer things related to the way of life. So, folklore research from a pragmatic perspective is feasible to be captured in the direction of ethical values and to endow human wisdom. Therefore the criteria that are extracted or analyzed from folklore (*fotu*) can be linked to moral theories namely utilitarian, moral imperative, human rights, justice and or virtue. Folklores

can disturb one's conscience to change attitudes and behavior. Second; content analysis theory. Vredenburg (in Nyoman K.R, 2015: 48) explains that content analysis is related to the content of communication both verbally in the form of language and non-verbal. The contents referred to in this literary work or literary tradition are messages that are in accordance with the essence of literature and literature referred to in this study is *Fotu*. The content of communication that is in my photo is the message (value) contained as a result of communication that occurs between the person who conveyed the photo and the recipient of my photo. Third; descriptive analysis theory (Nyoman K.R, 2015: 53) that is done by describing the facts from the interview then followed by analysis with the aim of finding the elements and giving sufficient explanation of the values contained in *fortu*.

3. METHOD

This study uses a type of qualitative research with descriptive analysis and content analysis methods. The analytical descriptive method (Nyoman K.R, 2015: 53) is done by describing the facts which are then followed by analysis. This research was conducted in the Diski KM 15 Binjai area. The researcher determined the informant with a purposive technique (M. Djunaidi and Fauzan A, 2012: 88), namely: 5 Nias women who had submitted and received their *fortu* in the process of traditional Nias marriage. Data collection is done by the technique of in-depth interviews. Researchers conduct research data collection by stages: a) conducting interview recording, b) conducting classification (classification) interview data, and c) conducting analysis. The researcher presented the data and qualitative descriptive analysis based on the recording during the interview and the values contained in the photo on the Nias traditional marriage procedures.

4. Exposure and Discussion of Fotu

From the results of the analysis, it can be explained that the values contained in *Fotu* are three, namely religious values, ethical values, and aesthetic values. Following is the translation of these values.

Religious value

Human Nias believes that all creations in this world were created by the highest of things as names, *Sihai*, *Lowalangi*, *Silewe*, and so on. The concept of this tradition is inherited downwardly so that the people of Nias have high spiritual values. Religious values are also contained in your photos that are delivered orally. The religious value in my picture is found that there is human dependence on God; "*Böi miröi Daroma Li Lowalangi. Da'ö sa zangorifi ya'ami irugi zi lö aetu*". That is, never leave God. Because, God is the source of life for your household to the hereafter. God is the source of life in the family, so the values of spirituality in the family are a priority.

The statement was further emphasized by the statement: "*Böi olifu ami Lowalangi. Da'ö lohe-lohe ba wa'auri, mangandrö khö Lowalangi, gofu hadia, zi sökhi si lö sökhi, mangandrö saohagölö khö Lowalangi. Ma hadia manö masala, ba da'ö lasao'ö khö Zo'aya. Khö Lowalangi mangandrö, asese möi ba Gereja*". That is, do not leave God, however the issue of living both fortunately and unfortunate is all to be grateful for. All problems faced are left to God. To God,

you must surrender, so often attend Church services and do various religious activities. These statements can be explained religiously that the Nias people pay homage to the holy by: a) Always remembering God in luck and luck, b) always thanking God, c) All problems are left to God, d) be submissive/surrender to God, e) often follow or do worship (Church), f) Follow religious activities/activities.

Ethical Value

The Nias people always fight for, uphold and carry out ethical values (ethics), namely goodness and morality. Through *Fotu* of Nias people in family life remain in the order of kindness and morality. Ethical values found in traditional Nias wedding photographs: "*Böi ofanö-fanö manö ha ya'ugö hulö simane me so'ö barö andre. Nilau-lau dödü manö, tola-tola manö. Na no sa'ae öruhi khö ninau so wöli ya'ugö, ba angona'ö khö ndrongau ba angona'ö ninau ba awena mofanö ndra'ugö nogu*". That is, don't go alone, as you wish. If you have lived in your home-in-law, when and wherever you have to communicate first to your mother-in-law and also your husband.

Based on ethical values, a son-in-law, even anyone in a Nias family member, may not like to travel, but ethically still communicate first to family members. In addition, from the ethical dimension in the marriage life Nias was found moral: "*Ba böi göi ha ma'ifu sala ba no göi öbözi*". That is, if you make a few mistakes, don't be immediately scolded or beaten but directed. Ethically, the Nias community fights that in family life there will be violence in the household such as punching anyone. *Fotu* explain the ethical values in Nias traditional customs, namely "*Tebai abua khöu na hadia niwaö ninau zowoli ya'ugö. Ba na hadia niwa'ö ndrongau ba böi fadahösi*". That is, you should not be lazy to do what is said by in-laws and do not swear if your husband tells you good things. *Fotu* explains ethically that the law-in-law in the family is prohibited from being lazy if the parent asks for help or tells them to do a job and is forbidden to swear or do something based on his own desires without communicating it to the husband.

The other ethical values contained in *folu* are the way to respect parents and guests through the giving of the betel nut: "*bola nafa, da'ö zabölö moguna ba khöda andre. Da'ö zumange fondrege zebua, nogu ...*". That is, my child, one of the ways and traditions is important to respect and uphold guests. In Nias, one way to respect and uphold honorable guests when coming home is to give betel vine. Similarly, in the family, a son-in-law when respecting his parents at home, he offers betel nut. This is confirmed in your picture; "*Bahiza öbidi nafa ö ninau. He tebai'ö sibai ba öfazawa'ö ba ae be'e ö ninau, ö namau nafa*". That is, give your mother a betel nut. Even though it feels heavy, hurry up, give betel to your mother and father. One tradition to respect parents in Nias and that is done by the son-in-law is by offering or giving betel nut to parents. In connection with this tradition, if you receive honored guests, then you are welcomed with a dance and then proceed with giving or presenting betel nut to distinguished guests on official occasions.

It was also seen that the Nias community paid attention to ethics namely "*böi foriti-riti wiga nogu na'ösasai*". That is, if you wash the dish, don't let it

sound like a mess. Based on the tradition of Nias, the morality that must be maintained is that it is not permissible to clean the dishes until there is a messy sound to other people. This is considered disrespectful to guests, swearing, being lazy, angry or not receiving guests coming at home.

Furthermore, the ethical aspect explains the value: "*He nogu ba na'ösou wakhe ba böi ofönai'ö öbe ba zinga mbowoa, la wai solu'a-lu'a ndra'ugö dania. Ba böi ebua'ö gö ndrongoau nogu e ... Ö ninau ba ö namau, da'ö zi'ö föna. Ö zatua zi'öföna ba awena ö niha bö'ö faoma dongau*". That is, when you eat together, don't put aside or store your food first because it's considered a greedy person. Don't also put scoop on rice for your husband because it's considered rude. However, the first to be served at meal time is your father and mother-in-law. Then food for your husband and other brothers. Based on the tradition of Nias, the moral precaution that is maintained is to always respect the parents, including when eating together. A son-in-law who is still one house with his in-laws, maintains moral conduct to always prioritize parents in any situation. In the Nias tradition, respect for parents is highly respected. Based on the results of the interview, it was found that every Nias women who married traditionally had to accept and apply all of her photographs in family and community life. Because this is a tradition carried out for generations. "*Fefu nono alawe simöi nihälö labe'e wotu ba lafalua wotu andrö bakha ba ngambatöra*". That is, all married women receive and apply their *fotu* to family life. Therefore, every bride on Nias in the process of customary marriage is reminded of figurative language: "*Böi be ba gölu-gölu mbu mö fefu niwaöma andre, ba böi be'e nono mbaru satöla, bahiza be'e ba mbörö dödomö*". That is to say, this *fotu* should not be stored on a roll of hair on the head or in a torn bag but still be remembered and stored in the conscience. This figurative sentence is full of meaning, that is, if something is stored on a roll of hair on the head, it will fall out when the hair roll is released. Similarly, if an object is stored in a torn bag, the object will fall. In other words, all of *fotu* are truly internalized and applied in family life and community life (Rosliani, 2017).

Aesthetic Value

The aesthetic values in the Nias community are revealed in the manner of acting. There are slogans in Nias language; "*Ha li si sökhi*", that is to say, the aesthetic value in human life is "speech". Examples of this aesthetic value can be understood through a number of informants, including: "*He nogu naso ndra ga'au, ira ga'au owöliwa. Ba böi tötoi döi ra. Ba naso ga'au ono alawe ba böi tötoi döi nia nogu; 'Ga'a lawe', ba he na ira akhimö nogu, ba "akhi" ökaoni*". That is, if your husband or brother-in-law comes to visit at home, do not mention or call their names but call with the greetings "ga'a (brother or sister)". Likewise the husband's brother, the eldest, never calls his name but is called "*Ga'a lawe*" (sister) and to your siblings, don't call names but call "*akhi*" (younger siblings). Based on this, aesthetically a son-in-law or Nias community aesthetically, when speaking to the other person, they should not immediately mention names. Calling or calling with a name is considered not to say polite to the other person.

Another aesthetic value is in *fotu*: "*Lö hadöi ina si lö sökhi fehede nogu, na бага wehede/gamuata nono ba бага gamuata nina*". That is, none of the

parents-in-law intentionally told their daughter-in-law badly. If the words of the son-in-law (children) are good, the speech and behavior of the parents-in-law are also good. This statement is further clarified by the statement: "*Faoma mituturu lala nawömi ba zi sökhi*". That is, as husband and wife tell each other goodness and truth. In family life, husbands and wives speak well to each other in fighting for good and truth. In other words, aesthetic speech is one measure of family harmony. Based on the *fotu* above, it can be understood that Nias in its tradition keeps good words to anyone, including the words of the son-in-law to in-laws or between husband and wife.

In Nias the words to the interlocutor are very concerned. Along with this tradition, there is an ancient proverb in Nias society namely "*ami Li, moroi ba gö*". That is, the word far feels good, rather than the taste of food. Based on this proverb, the meaning implies that good and true speech is an aesthetic value that must be upheld in Nias society. Nias people also prioritize greetings to others, namely "*ö'owai ira fefu he naso göra he na lö'ö*". That is, say hello to everyone, both rich and poor or whatever their situation. This expression explains that in Nias, greetings are the main thing in realizing aesthetic values. Usually, anyone and anytime or meeting anyone must greet and deliver greetings "*Ya'ahowu*". *Ya'ahowu* means blessing or "may you be blessed". By greeting "*Ya'ahowu*" especially when shaking hands with one another, then fellow partners talk to each other to bless and support each other. The greeting becomes a requirement before starting the conversation with the partner. Usually if there are people who have not cultivated this, they are considered not to have good character.

Conclusion

Fotu is one of the important processes in the traditional marriage of Nias. *Fotu* was carried out for generations and continues to this day. Based on the results of the study, *fotu* is very valuable. The cultural values contained in *fotu* in the marital process of traditional Nias are religious values, ethical values and aesthetic values. *Fotu* is very reasonable to be maintained considering the cultural values contained in it. *Fotu* in the traditional marriage process of Nias are used as a powerful way to maintain the ark of family life. Therefore it is very appropriate if this tradition continues to be carried out so that the marriage in Nias society is not eroded by the effects of modern life.

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